



***Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond
October 21-25, 2013***

Provincial government won't reconsider excluding First Nations from two oilsands hearings

[Calgary Herald](#)

October 20, 2013

Bob Weber



An oilsands facility seen from a helicopter near Fort McMurray, Alta. Photograph by: Jeff McIntosh/The Canadian Press/Files, Postmedia News

EDMONTON — The Alberta government says it won't reconsider recent decisions to bar two aboriginal groups from voicing concerns about oilsands developments on or near their traditional territories.

That refusal comes despite urgings from a Queen's Bench judge to loosen restrictions on who has the right to appear before boards making decisions on how development in the province can proceed.

The government "doesn't see that it's necessary to review those cases," said Nikki Booth, spokeswoman for Alberta Environment.

Earlier this year, the Metis Local 1935 from Fort McMurray and the Fort McKay First Nation filed statements of concern regarding oilsands developments.

The Metis are concerned about the Thickwood project proposed by Grizzly Oilsands Ltd., which would produce about 12,000 barrels of oil per day about 60 kilometres northwest of Fort McMurray. The group says the project is in an area used for hunting and other traditional activities and two of its members live there.

The Fort McKay band filed a statement of concern regarding an Athabasca Oil Sands Corp. (TSX:ATH) proposal for a 6,000 barrel a day pilot project about 20 kilometres from one of its reserves. It says the project will add to the ongoing extinction of moose and caribou from the area as well as damage traditional ceremonial sites used by Fort McKay.

"There are quite a few concerns that were filed," said band spokeswoman Dayle Hyde.

But in September, both groups were told they failed to make their case. Neither will be able to air their concerns to the body that decides how — or if — projects should proceed.

Fort McKay was told it hadn't provided hard evidence to show Athabasca's project would affect it.

"A connection between the alleged (traditional) activities, even if they are carried out in and around the project area, and the project has not been shown," said a Sept. 19 letter from the Alberta Energy Regulator.

No hearings at all will be held for the Athabasca proposal.

The Metis were told that having only two members that live on the land in question weren't enough.

"The ... filer must demonstrate that the majority of the group is directly affected by the aforementioned project," the department wrote on Sept. 20.

But Kyle Harrietha, manager of Local 1935, said his group hasn't even had a chance to figure out how it could be affected.

"There hasn't been any consultation, there's never been a traditional land use study, so we can't fully say what the traditional land use was," he said.

The government said the local could appear on behalf of its two members who live in the area, but Harrietha said that's not the same as speaking as a group.

"Aboriginal rights aren't held by the individual," he said. "What they're asserting is that we're basically a community association.

"They're treating us like a boy's and girl's club."

Alberta's policy on who has the right to speak at such hearings was criticized in an Oct. 1 court judgment. Justice Richard Marceau overturned a decision to bar two environmental groups from presenting concerns, largely because of a document suggesting the decision was made for political reasons.

Marceau added in a non-binding part of the ruling that restrictive rules on who can speak violate both the government's own legislation and previous court rulings.

"The process of identifying who is 'directly affected' should not be decided by the application of rigid rules," Marceau wrote.

He said hearings should seek a broad range of information and that doubts should be resolved in favour of the applicant.

"I think it's fair to say that (Marceau) was encouraging a wider application of the standing test than he perceived is being applied," said Sandy Carpenter, a Calgary lawyer whose practice focuses on resource and regulatory law.

Carpenter added that Harrietha has a point when he complains about the government dealing with individual aboriginals instead of communities.

"When First Nations and Metis say their rights are collectively based, they're right in saying that. If an aboriginal group can put forward the exercise of rights by members of the community in the area in question, that's something that should be taken into account."

Booth said the government decides who can speak at hearings based on the circumstances of each case.

"Each case has their own different impacts," she said.

She said the courts are available to groups that disagree with the government's ruling.

Harrietha said Local 1935 is considering its options.

"We'll be asking the government for a review. Depending on their response we'll have to determine whether further action is required."

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Talk4Healing Celebrates One Year Anniversary

[Net Newsledger](#)

October 21, 2013

Maryanne Matthews



ONWA Pow Wow in Thunder Bay in November 2012

THUNDER BAY - A year ago, Talk4Healing, A Help Line for Aboriginal Women, accepted its first official call. A first of its kind in Ontario, Talk4Healing has since helped over 1,500 Aboriginal women start their journey to healing by providing a culturally safe and appropriate resource that Aboriginal women and their families can call for help.

"Simply put, we help women and their families who need support," explains Robin Haliuk, Talk4Healing Coordinator. "As we have been taught through our traditional teachings, the [Medicine Wheel](#) provides powerful guidance in four key areas: Spiritual, Emotional, Physical and Mental. Talk4Healing follows in the traditional footsteps of our grandmothers and grandfathers by incorporating these teachings into our services, which is precisely what makes this help line so unique and so appropriately suited for Aboriginal women."

Before the creation of Talk4Healing, many Aboriginal women living in Northern Ontario communities had nowhere to turn to for help when they needed it.

Geographical isolation and the lack of services that is often the reality in small, northern communities acted as a barrier to healing. Now, help is only a phone call away.

"Traditionally, Aboriginal women have turned to their grandmothers, mothers, sisters, and aunts for support, but not all women are comfortable talking about their personal problems with relatives or friends," says Haliuk. "That's where Talk4Healing comes in. "We have trained Aboriginal counsellors available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, who are empathetic, understanding, and ready to address the unique needs to Aboriginal women."

Haliuk says that before Talk4Healing came to be, many Aboriginal women were suffering in silence. Having an Aboriginal specific help line to call for help, whether it be for crisis support, service referrals, telephone counselling, or just emotional support; has been a much needed and long-awaited service.

"We've received a lot of positive feedback from our callers who are so grateful for finally having somewhere to turn when they need help," she says. "We typically hear a great sense of relief when our callers realize they are talking to an Aboriginal woman on the other end of the line. Now that Talk4Healing is here, it's hard to imagine a time when this service didn't exist. I know we're making a huge difference in the lives of Aboriginal women and their families in Northern Ontario."

The Talk4Healing service area includes all Aboriginal women and their families living in Northern Ontario from the Manitoba border all the way to the Muskokas. To begin your journey to healing, call the toll-free number: 1-855-554-HEAL. For more information, visit www.talk4healing.com.



Talk4Healing vamps were created by the Talk4Healing staff and sent off to the "Walking with our Sisters" project in honour of all the missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

Poon a trusted friend to First Nations

[The StarPhoenix](#)

October 21, 2013

Bob Florence

Don Poon has two ceremonial lances from the First Nations. They are at the front of the table in his boardroom at work.

Poon is managing director of SAL Engineering Ltd. in Saskatoon. The company helps to build schools and health clinics. It paves streets, develops sewage treatment facilities, installs water pipelines and does other municipal works. SAL is a major player in Saskatchewan projects, especially with First Nations.

The lances were given to Poon as thanks. More than a facts and numbers guy, the native of Hong Kong is a trusted First Nations friend.

"I've been to the sand dunes twice in Fond du Lac," Poon said. "The First Nation took me there. They showed me. I'm thinking how can this be: A desert in Saskatchewan? It is one of the seven natural wonders of Saskatchewan.

"Through working on projects we developed a bond. I was invited on a winter caribou hunt."

This week Poon has work for Mistawasis west of Prince Albert and for Sweetgrass near Battleford. In November he will drive throughout Saskatchewan, including seeing how projects are progressing in Pelican Narrows and Ochapowace.

"The car shop tells me I'm going to need a new car soon," he said.

Even on weekends he goes to work, spending a few hours every Saturday and Sunday in SAL's office on the second floor of an Avenue C commercial unit. Married for 34 years, the father of a teen daughter, he is busy, but tries to stay balanced. He plays soccer. He laughs with buddies over beer after the game. The owner of SAL since 1993, he keeps looking for ways to do things better.

One of his current projects is an arena and community hall in Ochapowace. Work on the \$21-million complex started 16 months ago. Poon hopes people will be skating on the new rink in Ochapowace in February.

"This is all funded by the First Nations own economic development funding," Poon said. "They are building it with a design-build contractor. They can look at the multiplex and be proud they were part of the team that built this. There is a separate structure with a teepee-shaped room for elders to meet and teach their next generations.

"This is a team effort. Dear to my heart. It's a blueprint for others to follow."

Poon's dad Wah had a plan for Don. His dad was a contractor in Hong Kong. He encouraged Don, the oldest of the family's five children, with two sisters and two brothers, to move to North America. Earn a university degree, dad said. Then return home and work with me as a contractor/engineer.

Don thought about going to college in Texas, but because his parents had friends in Saskatoon, at 19 he came here instead. He went to Evan Hardy Collegiate for a year in 1974.

"Coming from Hong Kong, a concrete jungle, to the quiet," he said. "Too quiet. It was quite a change.

"I trained in the language. I adjusted. That year was a blast."

He couldn't afford long distance phone calls, so he recorded messages to his parents on cassettes and mailed them the tapes. He told them about his daily schedule. He told them about his marks in school. He went to parties.

"I didn't tell them that part," he said.

Poon studied at the University of Saskatchewan for the next four years.

He returned to Hong Kong with a bachelor of science in civil engineering. His career seemed set. Although secure, he wasn't satisfied. Less than a year later he came back to Saskatoon.

"I wanted to try on my own," he said.

He worked as an engineering consultant. Later he became an associate partner in the company. Now he is the major shareholder of the business.

"Lots of people have influenced me," Poon said. "One? I would say Gordon Sparks. He was my professor, my boss."

The learning continues. Poon goes to international conferences. He reads trade publications. He asks questions. His office door is open. Tell me if you encounter any problems, he tells his work colleagues.

"My biggest challenge is to train myself so that under any circumstance I can make an appropriate decision in the shortest time possible," Poon said. "Every project never goes 100 per cent smoothly. Something comes up out of the blue. A good engineer/project manager pinpoints the area to look at, knows what to do to make the best of the situation. A good decision is based on knowledge and experience."

Poon said this is the most important lesson he gives to engineering interns.

"I want them to develop confidence in what they can do," he said. "Think. Know your limits. If you are unsure, discuss it with your supervisor."

On a wall in SAL's boardroom is a framed photo of the band hall in Ahtahkakoop on Sandy Lake. SAL provided the project management know-how. Another picture is of the elementary school in Red Earth, a reserve south of Cumberland House. Damaged by flooding, the school is being replaced. SAL is on site. There is a picture of the arena in Moosomin. Credit SAL with the assist.

Much of Poon's work is about improving water quality and quantity in rural Saskatchewan. His fingerprints are all over the province.

He remembers a highway paving project he supervised in Shellbrook more than 20 years ago. The road has not been resurfaced since.

He thinks of Saskatoon's Broadway Bridge. Poon did the traffic geometrics for the bridge when it was redone in the 1980s. His wife Judy notices.

"Driving on the approach to the bridge is so smooth," she told him. "You did this."

Said Don: "In my heart I know when it's a good job."

Two ceremonial lances in the boardroom are confirmation.

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Statement by the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) on the Events Involving the Elsipogtog First Nation

[Turtle Island News](#)

October 21, 2013

OTTAWA, Oct. 18, 2013 - The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) unconditionally supports the Elsipogtog First Nation in exercising their aboriginal and human rights and categorically condemns the use of force by the RCMP to prevent the exercise of those rights.

The Elsipogtog First Nation was raising legitimate concerns about the environmental impacts of shale gas fracking which could have serious and negative impacts on its traditional territory and the health of its citizens. The environmental issues associated with shale gas fracking are far from clear. To raise concerns and to insist on an appropriate forum for airing these concerns is the proper things to do in a

democratic society. Instead, the Elsipogtog First Nation was met with pepper spray, rubber bullets and arrest. Both the rights of assembly and protest in a democratic society, and more profoundly, the aboriginal right to informed consent prior to commencing any projects affecting the traditional territories of aboriginal peoples, have been violated. Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come stated: "At a time in Canada's history when the intensified search for natural resources presents an opportunity for this country to address fundamental aboriginal concerns in an honourable and dignified way, the decision to meet the concerns of the Elsipogtog First Nation with brute force is shameful. There is another path, a path of authentic dialogue, reconciliation and inclusion, which is the only honourable way to move forward. To miss this historic opportunity will be disastrous for Canada. The response to the Elsipogtog First Nation sends a very provocative and ill-advised message to aboriginal peoples across the country."

This gross abrogation of fundamental human rights to free assembly and the disregard for aboriginal rights, coming at the conclusion of the visit to Canada by the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, can be interpreted as a direct response by this government to the conclusions of the Special Rapporteur on aboriginal human rights issues, and his reminders of the importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

SOURCE: Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)

Benchmark for Nation-building – Chief Isadore Day

[Net Newsledger](#)

October 21, 2013



Chief Isadore Day – Image from Anishinabek News

Serpent River First Nation – A summit will take place in Serpent River First Nation this week to discuss Lands and Economy. "In this fast-paced changing global economy, with land being the main target for development, First Nations can no longer wait for other jurisdictions or organizations to set the course of our

future – as Anishinabek, we must occupy that field. This week is a first step in establishing a planned approach with government that will clearly set in place the building blocks for a strong government-to-government strategy and bi-lateral success with other jurisdictions".

Benchmark for Nation-building

"This is a benchmark that we must achieve as we set in place our foundation for ***Nation-building***," says Chief Isadore Day, *Wiindawtegowinini*, Serpent River First Nation.

On October 22-24 2013, Serpent River First Nation and its Economic Development Corporation will host a discussion on ways to establish a clearer government-to-government strategy. The focus will be aimed at dealing with proposed development in the treaty territory of the Serpent River First Nation.

Economic Development Can't Wait

This summit has been established to engage community members, First Nation and Crown government partners, private sector partners and current and potential stakeholders in the development of a Community-based ***Sustainable Development*** strategy for Serpent River First Nation.

Attendees will look at challenges that exist for all three jurisdictions, First Nations, Canada and Ontario. Addressing the challenges surrounding a number of developments from mining, urban and rural cottage lot development and other key areas of regional economic development must include direct First Nation decision-making if "Treaty Implementation" is to ever be achieved – this is commonly understood but rarely achieved at the First Nation level.

The goal of the summit is to establish clearer government-to-government working relationships and bi-lateral arrangements specific to policy, decision-making and priority projects. Obtaining success will mean the achievement of a triple-bottom-line outcome; that means considering the highest degree of importance on the ***Land, People*** and ***Economy*** as a fundamental foundation to sustainability.

Pocahontas chant forces UBC to make changes

[Metro News](#)

October 21, 2013



Nick Wells/Metro People walk by a fountain at the University of B.C. on Sunday, October 20, 2013.

VANCOUVER – The University of B.C.'s Sauder School of Business has set out a series of measures to help students better understand First Nations people and issues.

The changes come after derogatory chants by students based on the Disney movie "Pocahontas" during undergraduate events during orientation week.

Vice-president of students, Louise Cowin, says a report shows there is very little awareness of First Nations people and their concerns among the students who were interviewed.

She says UBC clearly has a role to play in educating students to become more culturally aware.

Some of the measures include curriculum development on indigenous topics, ongoing engagement on aboriginal issues and reforming orientation week activities for new students.

The "Pocahontas" chant was based on the 1995 animated movie that has been criticized for its inaccurate portrayal of history and the perpetuation of aboriginal stereotypes.

Talbot House to expand services: Recovery centre looks to learn from First Nations communities

[CBC News](#)

Oct 21, 2013 1:02 PM AT



Talbot House an addiction recovery centre in Cape Breton held its first annual general meeting since it reopened in the spring. (George Mortimer/CBC)

Talbot House decided to expand its services at its annual general meeting on Sunday.

It's the first time the addiction recovery centre has held the meeting since it reopened in the spring.

The centre hasn't worked out exactly how it plans to expand. Talbot House's executive director Father Paul Abbass said has a few ideas though.

He wants to work with different communities, including First Nations, in order to expand the centre's reach.

"Is there a way in which we can partner up with them to be a part of the conversation around addiction and the power of that in the lives of young people. I think reaching out to communities, particular communities, First Nations communities —may be an example of that. Working on some better ways in order to measure our results so that we can help people to see the good work that is happening here and a continuation on a focus of excellence in terms of programming for the men who come to us," said Abbass.

He said it's time to guide Talbot House into the future.

The centre has just come through a rough year.

Talbot House was shut down by the province last year after questions were raised about how the centre operates. Abbass even stepped down as executive director for a time after the police began investigating him.

Eventually the police decided there was no evidence of criminal wrongdoing.

Jim Gogan is the incoming chair of the board.

"We've had a difficult time, I'm confident that time is behind us now. We've got new exciting opportunities ahead of us, we're fully operational now," said Gogan.

Brian Myles is a former resident of Talbot House, he's now a staff member.

He believes the centre is a special place.

"Most of my life has been in institutions and jails and prisons and then to come to this is just completely different and I like it, I like where my life is headed."

Abbass said Talbot House is now full and they even have a wait list.

Talbot House is now being overseen by the provincial department of health.

New Brunswick fracking protests are the frontline of a democratic fight

[The Guardian](#)

October 21, 2013



A girl plays the drums as she sings a traditional First Nations song during an anti shale gas demonstration in Montreal in support of the Mikmaq people of Elsipogtog First Nations in New Brunswick. Photograph: Oscar Aguirre/Demotix/Corbis

The image of burning police cars played endlessly on the evening news. Television and talk radio blared out reports of "clashes" between

police and indigenous protestors. Last Thursday in New Brunswick near the Elsipogtog First Nation, we were told the government had enforced an injunction against a blockade of a US shale gas company. There was nothing about the roots of a conflict years in the making. An appeal to the stereotype of indigenous violence was enough: once again, the natives were breaking the law; the police had to be sent in. Catching the headlines, Canadian could shake their heads and turn away their gaze.

But smoke and flames from police cars can only hide the truth for so long. The exact chronology is not yet settled, but this much is clear: on Thursday morning someone in government sanctioned the Canadian police to invade a peaceful protest site like an army. In a dawn raid, snipers crawled through the forest, putting children and elders in their cross-hairs. Police carried assault rifles and snarling dogs, and sprayed tear gas and shot rubber-type bullets. The result was predictable: shocked and enraged people, a day ending in chaos.

There is only one reason the police were unleashed. Not because of the New Brunswick Premier's claims about the dangers of an "armed encampment"; protestors had been unswervingly non-violent for months. Ever since 2010, when New Brunswick handed out 1.4 million hectares of land – one-seventh of the province – to shale gas exploration, opposition had [been mounting](#). Petitions, town hall meetings, marches on legislature had slowly transformed to civil disobedience, and in October, to the blockade of equipment that Texan SNW Resources was using for seismic testing. The company was losing \$60,000 daily, and the non-violent defiance had put a wrinkle in the Premier's plans for a resource boom. The blockade had to go.

The pundits howl or hand-wring about destroyed police cars, but say nothing about the destruction [wrought](#) by fracking. Short for "hydraulic fracturing," fracking pumps a toxic cocktail of chemicals, sand and water into deeply drilled wells. It shatters the bedrock to free shale gas. The chemicals – many of which are kept secret by industry – are linked to cancer and other illnesses. The process contaminates ground water and even causes earthquakes. And it doesn't just do violence to the earth: it releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas that contributes massively to climate change. Such concerns have spurred citizen movements to win moratoriums in Quebec, New York and France.

But Premier David Alward, hell-bent on opening up the province to shale gas, has spurned consultation with First Nations and the rest of the population. His latest step is demonization. "Clearly, there are those who do not have the same values we share as New Brunswickers," he cynically announced on Friday. But the opposition to the Premier's shale gas agenda is not just a supposedly isolated Indigenous community: it is [two of every three people](#) in Atlantic Canada. Little wonder he has repeatedly rejected a referendum on shale gas. It turns out the residents of

Elsipogtog aren't criminal deviants. They are the frontline of a fight for the democratic and environmental will of New Brunswick.

"It is our responsibility to protect Mother Earth, to protect the land for non-natives too," says Susan Levi-Peters, the former Chief of Elsipogtog. "My people are speaking up for everyone." Others have heard. Since the beginning of the summer, Levi-Peters has seen indigenous Maliseet, Acadians and anglophone New Brunswickers drawn to this new epicentre of resistance on her community's traditional lands. "People care about the water. People care about the environment. This isn't just a native issue."

But let's be clear about one way this is a "native issue": the rush underway for dirtier and more extreme fossil fuels and minerals, in New Brunswick and across Canada, is just the latest stage of colonial pillage. It's a badly-kept secret that Canada's oil, gas and mineral wealth, the key to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's reckless resource obsession, are mostly on Indigenous lands. And if industry is to have them, the country's national myths must be summoned. In last week's Speech from the Throne, Harper praised the "courage and audacity" of the country's "pioneers," who "forged an independent country where non would have otherwise existed." A day later, the raid on Elsipogtog was effectively a footnote.

Levi-Peters says the Mi'kmaq remember the "audacity" all too well. How their nation signed a peace and friendship treaty in 1761 to let the English settle but not to trample Mi'kmaq interests. How before they came for the shale gas, they came for the timber, the fish, the wildlife. And then for the children, locked away in residential schools and split from their connection to the land. The farms that were burnt to push them onto reserves. And how every act of resistance has been greeted by the same lectures from authority. "In no way can we as a country of laws condone the breaking of laws and violence," Premier Alward reminded them on Friday.

Tell that to Levi-Peters and the rest of the Mi'kmaq, who have been betrayed again and again by the law. The Canadian Supreme Court's judgment in the historic Marshall case in 1999 recognized the Mi'kmaq rights to fish for a living. But when the Mi'kmaq's attempted to practice that right, their boats were [rammed by government officials](#), their nets destroyed by non-native fishers agitated by state misinformation. That same judgment confirmed that the treaty of 1761 had never surrendered their lands. That Elsipogtog still owns, in fact, what SNW Resources now covets. And that the injunction order by a provincial judge is a convenient legal fiction, backed only by the power of brute police force.

This is the vast and enduring violence that is scarcely spoken of: a history of dispossession and resource theft under the guise of the "law." What Harper and every premier now offers indigenous peoples are promises they will have "every opportunity to benefit." They won't. In Elsipogtog, unemployment tips 80 percent and they want jobs, but fracking is too great a risk. As many as twenty people

crowd into one house, in a community that needs 500 new homes. Their share of a multi-billion dollar resource rush will be destitution and despair on its outskirts.

But in the protest movement against shale gas, many young Indigenous people have discovered a new reason for hope. Like one young man, 17 years old, who has camped at the site for the last weeks. "I'm worried about the water and the future of my children," he [says](#). He is among the terrifying warriors that shale gas-drunk politicians unleashed an armed police force on last week. Anxious that this might come, Levi-Peters sent a message this summer to the Premier. "You're going to make criminals out of us, because there is no way we can allow the fracking," she wrote him. His office never bothered to reply. She now has his response: Harper's pioneers aim to march on.

Unless, of course, Canadians are prepared to break with the past. Many are. Tens of thousands have [signed petitions](#), and many others [marched](#) alongside indigenous peoples in dozens of cities and towns since Thursday. It is a sign that the actions of the New Brunswick and the Canadian government may backfire. What the government and corporate media crave now is more mayhem, to sell to the public the repression they have sought all along. What they fear most is a movement armed only with drums and eagle feathers and a sacred relationship to the land, touching the hearts of ever more Canadians.

Freed of the distractions, we will be left with a single question. Do we obey provincial dictates that grant a company license to pollute the water? Or the laws of Indigenous peoples, of the Supreme Court, and of our conscience, calling us to protect it? The answer will tell us everything about the kind of country we will have.

Lawyer says Métis also deserve respect from Manitoba Hydro at hearing

[Winnipeg Free Press](#)

October 21, 2013



ARTIST'S RENDERING

A drawing of the planned of Keeyask Dam generating station.

The Manitoba Métis Federation says it is prepared to go to court, if necessary, to force Manitoba Hydro to treat its people with the same respect it now affords First Nations people in the development of northern hydro generating stations, including the proposed Keeyak

generating station.

At the first day of Clean Environment Commission hearings into the proposed Keeyask dam, the MMF said the Nelson River system to York Factory was one of the historic highways for the Métis as part of the fur trade network and remains important today.

"Contrary to what you're going to hear from Manitoba Hydro and its First Nation partners throughout the hearing, the Métis , as a distinct aboriginal people, fit into that historic narrative in this region," the federation's lawyer, Jason Madden, said today.

The Métis story in the region is not the same as those of the First Nations "but it's no less worthy of acknowledgement, respect and consideration."

Madden likened the Métis situation to that of First Nations decades ago when "treaties weren't worth the paper they were written on."

But through court intervention and a measure of political good will, there have been some "rebalances" for First Nations in the development of hydro, he said.

"The same indifference and arrogance that Manitoba Hydro exhibited to First Nations in the past continues towards the Manitoba Métis Federation, and you're going to hear about that," he told the commission.

The proposed \$6.2-billion Keeyask generation site is located in northern Manitoba in the Split Lake Resource Management Area. It is 725 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg on the lower Nelson River and 35 kilometres upstream of the existing Kettle Generating Station where Gull Lake flows into Stephens Lake.

First Nation partners with Hydro in the Keeyask project include: Tataskweyak, War Lake, York Factory and Fox Lake first nations.

First Nations Education Act rollout paternalistic, say teachers, aboriginals

[Ottawa Citizen](#)

October 21, 2013

Terry Pedwell

OTTAWA - The Harper government risks repeating the mistakes of the past by the way it's proposing a new First Nations Education Act, say aboriginal groups and education advocates.

The government says the legislation — a draft of which is expected to be released as early as Tuesday — is aimed at giving First Nations control over their own education.

But Tyrone McNeil, president of the Vancouver-based First Nations Education Steering Committee, said his province already has an accountable, functioning education system.

And British Columbia aboriginals don't need Ottawa dictating changes that could jeopardize or undermine that system, McNeil said in an interview Monday.

"(The bill is) clearly going to include more control from the federal government," he said. "That's one of our biggest fears."

McNeil said he also expects the draft to include "soft language" defining aboriginal culture and levels of education funding.

What is needed is not reform, but rather adequate and sustained nationwide funding to support an already comprehensive and responsive system, he added.

The bill comes as major unrest and discontent continues to simmer among First Nations communities.

First Nations want more say over everything from education to local governance to resource development.

The Idle No More movement has also been demanding a respectful dialogue between Ottawa and First Nations about how their communities are funded and accountability for the money that's spent.

There have also been tensions over resource development projects that have spilled over political lines.

Members of New Brunswick's Elsipogtog First Nation celebrated Monday after a judge in that province lifted an injunction that ordered them to end their blockade outside a compound owned by SWN Resources.

They are opposed to a shale gas development that they say could harm the environment, particularly local drinking water supplies.

The Harper government released a so-called blueprint document this summer that promised to give First Nations authority over and accountability for their education programs.

But since then, several groups have urged Ottawa to abandon the blueprint, saying it doesn't meet standards set out by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"This unilateral development of the act has not met the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate First Nations," the British Columbia Teachers' Federation wrote in an Oct. 3 letter to the prime minister.

B.C.'s education minister, Peter Fassbender, has also urged Ottawa not to interfere in the ongoing relationship that province has with its aboriginal communities.

Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief Shawn Atleo also wrote earlier this month that the legislation is being forced onto aboriginal communities without proper consultation.

And he suggested the way it's being handled is akin to how the government tried to assimilate aboriginal children through residential schools.

Members of the Vancouver committee met Monday with Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt to receive a briefing on the proposed bill. They refused comment on details after the meeting.

First Nation investigation yields oil companies responsible for a fraction of cost for spills

[Prince George Local News](#)

October 21, 2013

Jonothon Brown



With assurances from the federal government that any dangers on oil spills will be covered by companies at fault, one First Nation committee decided to see if that was really true.

After posing as a member of the oil industry, Coastal First Nations say they've learned that an offending oil company would not be on the hook for much of the cost of a spill.

Executive Director Art Sterrit says they posed as part of the industry to 6 major carriers, asking through an e-mail chain what legal liability the companies have in the event of a spill.

He says what they learned from industry lawyers was that companies are legally responsible for only \$1.4 billion in costs.

"If you have a spill the size of the Exxon Valdez on the coast of BC, which is very likely, you're actually looking at bigger tankers proposed for Kitimat, that would cost \$23 billion to clean up. Well, the 1.4 billion doesn't come anywhere near that," Sterrit says.

"All the spills that we've seen, whether it's the Exxon Valdez, they've never cleaned up more than 15% of that," he says. "Or the Gulf of Mexico, where you have the most gentle climate in the world, in that area they were able to clean up 20% of the spill, and that cost them \$40 billion to clean up that 20%"

Sterrit notes Mexico's tides average 2 meters, while BC tides reach heights of 24 meters.

"So almost any size spill that we have on the coast of BC would not be covered by industry. \$1.4 billion in this day and age is not a lot of money," Sterrit says. "We're not being fooled by anybody here. The capacity doesn't exist. The Technology doesn't exist, and industry isn't stepping up."

UN special rapporteur highlights First Nations issues in eight-day Canadian tour: James Anaya stops in Winnipeg amid demonstrations

[The Manitoban](#)

October 21, 2013

Kevin Linklater

A UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples's recent visit to Canada has thrust First Nations issues back into the national spotlight.

Special rapporteur James Anaya visited Canada to bring attention to the country's record on the treatment of its Aboriginal population. Anaya toured Manitoba, stopping in Winnipeg on Oct. 12 before visiting Pukatawagan, a reserve in the northern part of the province. In Winnipeg, he was greeted by hundreds at Portage and Main, who performed a traditional jingle dress dance.

Michael Champagne took part in the demonstration and waved an upside down Canadian flag with the head of an Aboriginal man superimposed over the maple leaf.

"We want to make sure [the special rapporteur] knows what a united community we are. That's why we chose this spot of Portage and Main [. . .] We also want to show that we will not forget our missing and murdered sisters; we will no longer stand for this institutional injustice."

Champagne was referring to the nearly 600 missing and murdered Aboriginal women across the country, an issue that the special rapporteur has said needs to be

addressed by the Canadian government. The Harper government, however, has resisted calling an inquiry.

Another demonstrator who did not want to be named suggested that this issue goes beyond missing and murdered women, and speaks to the broader history between Canada and First Nations people.

"He knows it's a systemic problem. He's not willing to address the question. Not just Harper himself. It's the whole government, all of Canadian society," said the demonstrator.

"Canada doesn't want to address this, as it goes to the root of what Canada is. Canada was founded on a genocide, and it is continuing and is still being ignored by this country."

Other issues are being raised by the special rapporteur, such as the need for the government to properly consult with First Nations when it comes to resource extraction. This issue grabbed national attention last week when protesters in New Brunswick demonstrating against a shale gas development clashed with police, resulting in over 40 arrests and several police vehicles being torched.

University of Manitoba Aboriginal Students Association (UMASA) co-president Kyra Wilson helped organize a protest in Winnipeg in support of the New Brunswick activists.

"When it comes to contaminating lands, it goes above and beyond profits. It's about sustaining an environment where future generations can live. It's something today that the government isn't focusing on; they are focused on very short-term goals, and are not looking at the long term," said Wilson.

Protesters again converged at the intersection of Portage and Main, and marched west down Portage Avenue to an RCMP detachment at Dominion Street, blocking off a lane of traffic to draw attention to what was happening in New Brunswick.

"With this resource extraction, and exploiting traditional lands, it doesn't just affect First Nations," said Wilson. "It affects all Canadians. These companies need to consult with the people who live on the lands. And they haven't been sharing the benefits of the extraction. The people that live there should be benefiting, but they're not."

The position of UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples was established in 2001 with the goal of gathering and receiving information from governments, indigenous people, and their communities "on alleged violations of their human rights and fundamental freedoms" and to "formulate recommendations

and proposals on appropriate measures and activities to prevent and remedy violations.”

The special rapporteur wrapped up his eight-day tour of Canada on Oct. 15 with a press conference in Ottawa.

“From all I have learned, I can only conclude that Canada faces a crisis when it comes to the situation of indigenous peoples of the country,” he said.

N.B. Premier firm on shale-gas pledge as anti-fracking protesters cheer injunction’s end

[Globe and Mail](#)

Oct. 21 2013, 9:06 PM EDT

Jane Taber



Just days after a violent anti-fracking protest, New Brunswick Premier David Alward is pressing ahead with his vow to develop a shale gas industry, suggesting First Nations people will share the economic benefits.

But natives are not budging, arguing that their drinking water, which they fear the fracking process could contaminate, is not for sale.

In an interview on Monday, Mr. Alward said he is hoping SWN Resources, the Texas energy company exploring for shale gas near Rexton, N.B., will resume its operations.

He made his comments as native protesters and Elsipogtog First Nation people cheered a New Brunswick judge’s decision on Monday to lift an injunction that had ordered them to stop blocking trucks from leaving the SWN Resources compound to do seismic testing in the area.

The trucks were removed after the RCMP moved in on the native protesters’ encampment last Thursday to enforce the injunction.

Some First Nations people interpreted the judge’s decision as a message to SWN to leave the province. The Premier sees no correlation.

“It’s very much one day at a time,” Mr. Alward said of the resumption of SWN operations. “What we have to remember is that the current work that SWN is doing is exploration. That’s what this phase has been.”

SWN has not replied to requests to comment on when or if it will restart exploration.

"Certainly, my hope and my confidence is that we will see a shale gas industry develop in New Brunswick," Mr. Alward said. "We can't afford otherwise."

He said it would bring prosperity to the province and allow young people who have moved west for work to return home. The Premier repeated, too, that the industry would be developed safely and securely with environmental studies and consultations with First Nations.

"In the end, we are all collectively going to benefit as New Brunswickers, including First Nations, both as individuals but as communities as well," he said.

Support has poured in for Elsipogtog First Nation from other native groups across the country after Thursday's violence, in which police cars were torched, rocks thrown and protesters pepper-sprayed. Over the weekend, the native leadership there called for calm – and uneasy quiet has fallen, although protesters remain at the encampment.

It is not clear how the situation will be resolved.

"There is absolutely no way, absolutely no way [we] are going to agree to any form of fracking on or near our community," said Robert Levy, a band councillor and a former Elsipogtog chief. "They can offer everything. They can offer all the monies they want. We just can't take that chance of our water for our kids and our kids yet to be born."

Native groups are not the only ones concerned about fracking. Liberal opposition leader Brian Gallant is calling for a moratorium.

"I believe we need to press pause," Mr. Gallant said, noting that two studies of the industry are to be released in the next year. "The environment and health risks concern me more than the potential economic benefits excite me."

Mr. Gallant is meeting on Tuesday with native leaders. Mr. Alward said provincial and band officials are trying to work out a process to resolve the situation. He decided to skip a trade mission this week to Brazil with his Atlantic colleagues to deal with the situation.

With a report from the Canadian Press

Was Racism Responsible For Saskatoon Missing Out On A Casino

Onlinecasino.org

October 22, 2013

Gary Parkinson



On October 22, 2003 the Saskatoon city council voted down a proposal to develop a First Nations-run casino in the city. The campaign on the motion was very divisive for the community, and resulted in what many city councilors described as racist opposition to the casino proposal.

Ten years later, the central players in the proposal reflect that the vote to strike the motion down cost the city economically. Due to the motion's defeat, the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Association (SIGA), the chief proponents for the casino, instead built the Dakota Dunes Casino on First Nations land south of the city.

The result of a casino near the city but not part of the city was a mixed bag for Saskatoon. Rather than place bets at a Saskatoon casino, where the city would receive a significant share of gaming revenue, city residents travelled south to the Dakota Dunes venue, and consequently took money out of the Saskatoon economy.

SIGA's proposal in 2003 was for a three-story casino that would invest over \$65 million into Saskatoon, and create an estimated 700 jobs associated with the gambling facility. The proposal was supported by the city of commerce, the tourist department, and several members of city council – including then Mayor Jim Maddin, who ultimately lost the municipal election over the issue.

The casino became crucial to the 2003 election, where mayoral candidates expressed their firm support or opposition to the proposal. One candidate, Jim Pankiw, was staunchly against the casino, and made what many commentators described as racist remarks directed to First Nations people in his speeches against an "Indian-run casino."

Councilor Tiffany Paulsen, who is one of the few councilors in 2003 to still serve on council today, says she regrets that perceived racism distracted the city from reasonable discussion involving the casino – of which she supported.

"Gambling is a legal activity, and I wanted to see increased employment in the First Nations community."

The defeat of the proposal marked the second time Saskatoon rejected a downtown casino. Paulsen and other current councilors believe a third referendum today is very unlikely given the scarring history of past proposals.

Songhees' wellness centre dovetails with First Nations Health Authority initiative

[Victoria Times Colonist](#)

October 21, 2013 10:05 PM

Sarah Petrescu



Songhees Chief Ron Sam at the wellness centre being built at Admirals and Maplebank roads. It will house a health centre, conference space, a kitchen and recreational activities. Photograph by: BRUCE STOTESBURY, Times Colonist

Doug Kelly hopes that the new First Nations Health Authority can be part of the cure for many of the health problems in B.C. aboriginal communities, including some he knows about first-hand.

B.C. First Nations took over their own health care this month, assuming control of all Health Canada programs and administration on reserves.

"Before, Health Canada made all the decisions about health care on First Nations lands, away from us and the regional health authorities," Kelly said. He is Sto:lo Tribal Council Grand Chief, which covers the Fraser Valley region, and is chairman of the First Nations Health Council. "Now, no decision is made without us. ... We want to integrate services and make them better."

This has become personal for Kelly. He said he got a wake-up call about his health about a year ago at a conference, where chiefs on the health council were given a physical assessment.

"I failed miserably," he said. Weighing 333 pounds at the time, he had high blood pressure and a terrible diet. A news report referred to him and his colleagues as "beefy chiefs."

Kelly took action by exercising and watching his diet. After losing nearly 80 pounds, he has more resolve than ever and has challenged others to do the same.

"I realized I wanted to be around for my great-grandchildren. ... One of the things we want to do differently is to look at our own responsibility for wellness," he said, adding that First Nations leaders across the country are paying close attention to what B.C. and the new health authority are doing. Despite the pressure to succeed, "I'm looking forward to changing the world," he said.

Songhees Chief Ron Sam said he thinks the creation of a First Nations-governed health system is a good thing, but he's a little nervous about how it's all going to work.

"At this point, we need to find out more and if our programs will be impacted," he said.

The Songhees are building a \$16-million wellness centre at Admirals and Maplebank roads that will house a health centre, as well as conference space, kitchen and recreational activities. It's set to open Jan. 22.

Meanwhile, on Oct. 1, the First Nations Health Authority moved into the Pacific regional office of Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit health branch in Vancouver, which has more than 300 staff. It assumed control of administration and health programs for the province's First Nations — including 31,000 residents in about 50 communities on Vancouver Island.

"As far as service and service delivery, there won't be a lot of change in the first two years as we get a handle on the work," said Lydia Hwitsum, chairwoman of the authority's board of directors and a Cowichan Tribes member. Services include primary-care clinics, nurse visits and telehealth.

In remote aboriginal communities, the First Nations Health Authority will continue to provide primary care.

The authority is hiring, mainly community nurses in remote areas.

"We're facing the same challenges as everyone else in terms of staffing and services," Hwitsum said. "But all our structure is now in B.C. In terms of identifying priorities and gaps, we're better able to respond in a timely way."

The First Nations Health Authority is a positive step toward better health and self-governance, despite the many logistical challenges it faces, said Charlotte Reading, director of the Centre for Aboriginal Health Research at the University of Victoria.

"In fact, research has demonstrated a convincing relationship between the health of First Nations people and the degree of control communities have over the policies and programs that affect them," she said. "With active involvement from communities, health funding is more likely to be allocated where it is needed most, and a strong commitment will be made to addressing the unique social determinants of First Nations' health in British Columbia."

For information on the First Nations Health Authority, visit: www.fnha.ca

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Judge gives murderer Toby Land chance to seek parole in 10 years

[Ottawa Citizen](#)

October 22, 2013

Andrew Seymour



A Facebook photo of Toby Little Otter, who was convicted of second-degree murder in the death of Dominic Doyon in 2009.

OTTAWA — The mother of a murdered man walked out of the courtroom Tuesday as a judge gave her son's killer the chance to seek parole at the earliest opportunity for second-degree murder.

Toby Little Otter Land received an automatic life sentence for killing Dominic Doyon, but Ontario Superior Court Justice Catherine Aitken concluded Land should be eligible for parole after 10 years following a tragic Aboriginal upbringing marred by abject sexual abuse, neglect, racism and discrimination.

"If ever there was a case where the systemic factors affecting Aboriginals in this country, as experienced in the life of an Aboriginal offender, played a role in bringing that Aboriginal offender before the court, it is this case," said Aitken.

"Surely society writ large must share some of the moral culpability associated with this terrible crime," she added.

"I don't care," Doyon's mother, Manon, said in French as she walked out of the courtroom.

Later, she sat crying in the cafeteria of the courthouse, gently stroking a framed photo of her son cradling his newborn daughter.

Land attacked Doyon with a hammer after he came home to find Doyon with a 15-year-old girl in a Murray Street apartment in May 2009.

Land was raped by his father as a child and has another conviction for attacking a man he perceived was a child molester.

His sentencing hearing heard that he acted out with rage to people he perceived were abusing children.

A second man, Carl St. Cyr, participated in the attack, beating Doyon with a crutch.

Doyon, who suffered 87 separate wounds, was also stabbed four times with a Samurai sword. The fatal wound pierced his heart.

St. Cyr testified at that trial that he was the one who stabbed Doyon with the sword, even though Land had initially admitted to police that he was the one responsible. St. Cyr, who pleaded guilty to manslaughter, was sentenced to 7½ years in prison.

The Crown had been asking for a 15-year period of parole ineligibility.

More to come.

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Small space, but architect Douglas Cardinal has grand vision for First Nations students

[Metro News](#)

October 22, 2013

Sean McKibbin



Denis Armstrong/Metro Carleton University students celebrate the opening of a new Aboriginal Centre at Carleton University with a cake cutting on Monday.

Carleton University's new Aboriginal Centre opened Monday.

Designed by renowned Canadian architect Douglas Cardinal, the 1850 square foot lounge and meeting area is, as Cardinal described it, "a round peg in a square hole."

Formerly old office space located in the Paterson building off Carleton's central quad, the new centre which has been named Ojigkwanong which means 'morning star', is a vortex of rounded, undulating walls and sculptured wood ceilings and surfaces identical to Cardinal's most famous design for the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

The \$125,000 cost of the construction was funded by the school and private donations. When completed in spring 2014, it will serve as a hub for Carleton's 700 Aboriginal students.

"This is a space where we can be close to our community and find spiritual renewal," said Geraldine King, an Ojibway and fourth-year Canadian Studies student.

"Everything about the design represents the Aboriginal people, our culture," said Cardinal, whose ancestry is Blackfoot and Metis. "Everybody is equal in a circle. There is no hierarchy here. Everyone is welcome. This is a total democracy."

And while the scale of the job may be small by Cardinal's standards, it is a job he wanted. One of Canada's most-recognizable architects, Cardinal is currently working on major architectural projects including the new Plasco Centre on Moodie Drive, and the National Museum of Aboriginal People in Beijing, China.

"I don't care about the size, it's the relationship between people and the room I care about," he said. "It's important to Aboriginal people to have their own space. First Nations are Canada's apartheid. We have to change that."

Canada faces crisis over indigenous issues despite painstaking efforts: UN

[China Post](#)

October 23, 2013, 12:08 am TWN

Alexandra Olson, AP

UNITED NATIONS--Canada is facing a crisis over aboriginal issues despite years of efforts to overcome tensions and address social problems, a U.N. expert who recently visited the country said Monday.

James Anaya, U.N. special rapporteur on indigenous rights, said Canada has not narrowed social disparities between aboriginal and other Canadians in recent years.

He said disputes over land and natural resources continue to be a source of tension and distrust.

Such disputes include recent protests against shale gas exploration in eastern New Brunswick, opposed by the Elsipogtog First Nation. The protests turned violent last week when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police enforced an injunction to end a demonstration against seismic testing by energy company SWN Resources. Six police vehicles were set on fire and 40 people were arrested.

Anaya said he had no first-hand knowledge of the violence, which occurred after his visit, but he called it a "manifestation of this frustration with the unresolved issues."

"There's a crisis in Canada with regard to indigenous issues, notwithstanding some important developments within Canada over the last decades," Anaya said at a news conference.

On Monday, a New Brunswick judge lifted the injunction against a blockade outside a compound owned by SWN Resources, saying it was no longer needed because vehicles and equipment owned by the company have been removed and protesters are no longer blocking the road.

Members of the Elsipogtog First Nation beat drums and sang in celebration.

The chief of Elsipogtog, Aaron Sock, criticized the police for their actions and vowed to keep up the fight against the shale gas exploration. The RCMP defended its actions, saying it had worked hard to try to resolve the situation peacefully before moving in.

In a statement following his visit to Canada, Anaya said aboriginal peoples live in conditions comparable to much poorer countries.

He said one in five indigenous Canadians live in dilapidated and often overcrowded homes and "funding for aboriginal housing is woefully inadequate." He said the suicide rate among Inuit and First Nations youth on reserve is more than five times greater than that of other Canadians. One community Anaya visited had suffered a suicide every six weeks since the start of the year.

Anaya said such problems persist even though Canada was one of the first countries to extend constitutional protection to the rights of indigenous people, has taken notable steps to repair the legacy of past injustices and has develop processes for land claims "that in many respects are models for the world to emulate."

Anaya, who is planning to present a full report to the U.N. Human Rights Council, had several recommendations for Canada's government.

He encouraged the government "to take a less adversarial" approach to land claim settlements "in which it typically seeks the most restrictive interpretation of aboriginal and treaty rights possible."

First Nations Education Act rollout called paternalistic

[CBC News](#)

Oct 22, 2013 10:56 AM ET



Children take part in a protest on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Feb. 14, 2013 calling for equal education for First Nations. Draft legislation on a First Nations education reform act is expected as early as Tuesday. (Sean Kilpatrick/Canadian Press)

The Harper government risks repeating the mistakes of the past by the way it's proposing a new First Nations Education Act, say aboriginal groups and education advocates.

The government says the legislation — a draft of which is expected to be released as early as Tuesday — is aimed at giving First Nations control over their own education.

But Tyrone McNeil, president of the Vancouver-based First Nations Education Steering Committee, said his province already has an accountable, functioning education system.

And British Columbia aboriginals don't need Ottawa dictating changes that could jeopardize or undermine that system, McNeil said in an interview Monday.

"(The bill is) clearly going to include more control from the federal government," he said. "That's one of our biggest fears."

McNeil said he also expects the draft to include "soft language" defining aboriginal culture and levels of education funding.

What is needed is not reform, but rather adequate and sustained nationwide funding to support an already comprehensive and responsive system, he added.

But Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt said earlier this month that [the federal government wants to see reform first](#) before committing more funds.

"Reform will take place, funding will follow. But funding will not replace reform because the current system is failing these kids," Valcourt said in an interview with CBC News.

First Nations tensions

The bill comes as major unrest and discontent continues to simmer among First Nations communities.

First Nations want more say over everything from education to local governance to [resource development](#).

The Idle No More movement has also been demanding a respectful dialogue between Ottawa and First Nations about how their communities are funded and accountability for the money that's spent.

There have also been tensions over resource development projects that have spilled over political lines.

Members of [New Brunswick's Elsipogtog First Nation](#) celebrated Monday after a judge in that province [lifted an injunction](#) that ordered them to end their blockade outside a compound owned by SWN Resources.



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo has warned the government against forcing through legislation without consultation. (Bill Graveland/Canadian Press)

They are opposed to a shale gas development that they say could harm the environment, particularly local drinking water supplies.

The Harper government released [a so-called blueprint document](#) this summer that promised to give First Nations authority over and accountability for their education programs.

But since then, several groups have urged Ottawa to abandon the blueprint, saying it doesn't meet standards set out by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"This unilateral development of the act has not met the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate First Nations," the British Columbia Teachers' Federation wrote in an Oct. 3 letter to the prime minister.

B.C.'s education minister, Peter Fassbender, has also urged Ottawa not to interfere in the ongoing relationship that province has with its aboriginal communities.

Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief [Shawn Atleo also wrote earlier this month](#) that the legislation is being forced onto aboriginal communities without proper consultation.

And he suggested the way it's being handled is akin to how the government tried to assimilate aboriginal children through residential schools.

Members of the Vancouver committee met Monday with Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt to receive a briefing on the proposed bill. They refused comment on details after the meeting.

Aboriginal people get embedded with radio crew, police

[Wawatay News](#)

October 21, 2013

Rick Garrick

A day with CBC Radio's Superior Morning crew was a hit with Anishinabe author Sandi Boucher.

"I got there at 5:45, just as the show was starting," Boucher said. "I was right in the booth with Lisa (Laco) and Mary Jean Cormier and looking at Elliott (Doxtater-Wynn) in the next booth so it was absolutely amazing."

Boucher visited the morning show on Oct. 3 as part of CBC Thunder Bay's Embedded project, which offered ordinary Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people the chance to explore, examine and experience life outside their cultural comfort zone.

"CBC Radio, in my opinion, has always done an amazing job of being respectful and coming out with projects like this that allow those bridges to be built between the two cultures," Boucher said. "So the chance to go in there and do something that I never would have imagined possible for me was just something I couldn't pass up on."

Boucher said the Aboriginal staff at CBC Thunder Bay make a difference in the station's coverage of events.

"Because they have First Nations staff, it allows them to consider other projects and it allows them an insight they wouldn't have otherwise," Boucher said. "Those staff are there and they're offering their opinions on topics, and it allows them to first cross over the bridge and then be able to take their listeners along with them."

Boucher was surprised with the amount of work involved in producing the morning show.

"Listening to them every day, it sounds to them to me like they're sitting around the kitchen table just talking, just taking turns," Boucher said. "But to see what goes into it and how timed it has to be because there's the national network as well. Everything has to be timed absolutely perfectly."

Boucher's friends were "quite excited" to hear her on the radio.

"My followers know I am very interested in the city and always looking at new ways to try to work with people and to increase understanding of First Nations people," Boucher said. "I even had friends from southern Ontario tuning in to hear it, so that was awesome."

The Embedded project was developed by CBC Thunder Bay reporter Jody Porter to provide listeners with an opportunity to spend a day with the Superior Morning crew, take part a traditional First Nations ceremony, visit an First Nations after-school program, be chief for a day with Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Harvey Yesno, learn the secret of making bannock, go behind the scenes with a mining company, be mayor for a day with Thunder Bay Mayor Keith Hobbs or to take a shift with a Thunder Bay police officer.

"It's our version of reality TV, without the TV," said Susan Rogers, program manager for CBC Thunder Bay. "Our hope is that individuals from both communities who engage in the project will come away with a new understanding from their experience — and have a lot of fun in the process."

Lakehead University student Ken Cyrette, from Fort William, took the shift with a police officer on Oct 4 as a comparison to other police ride-alongs he has done in the past with First Nations police officers.

"By comparison, the duties of a Thunder Bay police officer is much more busy compared to a First Nations organization," Cyrette said. "There is just so much more for a police officer in the City of Thunder Bay to do. The city is much more busy, with more things going on and more calls to respond to compared to a First Nation where you may not get a call."

Cyrette said the ride-along with Thunder Bay Police Const. Gordon Snyder involved proactive traffic stops for cell phones or speeding.

"Generally, there are claims by people in our community that traffic stops occur or they are pulled over based on who they are or the colour of their skin," Cyrette said.

"After seeing these traffic stops executed, that is all just coincidental. Their driving behavior or their actions are 100 per cent the main reason people are pulled over. It has nothing to do with their background."

Satellite aboriginal reserves a 'huge concern'

[Maple Ridge News](#)

October 21, 2013

Jeff Nagel



Belcarra Mayor Ralph Drew, vice-chair of Metro Vancouver's aboriginal relations committee; B.C. Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister John Rustad.

The province is asking the federal government to tread cautiously with its proposal to let First Nations set up satellite reserves within cities that may circumvent local planning and taxes.

Critics fear the outcome could be unregulated pockets of land in the midst of cities that are no longer subject to zoning or other civic rules and don't contribute to municipal or regional taxes.

B.C. aboriginal relations minister John Rustad said Monday the proposed changes to the federal additions-to-reserve policy are important to fostering economic development by aboriginal bands, but added the province has heard concerns of cities and has asked the federal government to take them into account.

"We want to see First Nations pursuing their own economic, community and social objectives," Rustad said. "We don't want to see anything that is going to hurt the opportunities that we have for First Nations to be able to pursue that. But at the

same time we also want to make sure that local governments are not adversely affected."

The [additions-to-reserve policy](#) has existed since 1972, letting aboriginal bands acquire property and add it to their reserve, usually to accommodate population growth.

But it was a slow and cumbersome [process](#) and newly created reserve land had to be roughly contiguous to an existing reserve.

That requirement is gone from the draft policy, which opens the potential for any band in B.C. to buy distant land for economic development – possibly in urban areas of the Lower Mainland – and transform it into reserve land where normal limits on development don't apply.

Rustad said he doesn't see the satellite reserve scenario as a big issue, adding the positioning of some aboriginal communities and cities mean it's unavoidable that some new reserve land won't be contiguous.

Belcarra Mayor Ralph Drew, vice-chair of Metro Vancouver's aboriginal relations committee, isn't comforted.

"There's huge questions, huge concerns," Drew said. "It would create the proverbial patchwork quilt where any sense of coordinated land use and planning goes out the window."

New reserve land wouldn't be subject to rules protecting farmland, so First Nations could in theory buy up land in the Agricultural Land Reserve, convert it to reserve land and build anything they want.

"All of a sudden the box is open," Drew said.

Such a scenario could be so profitable, he added, that First Nations might not need their own money to buy the land and start construction, but merely a development company partner with financing and expertise.

A report outlining Metro concerns with the policy goes before the board on Friday.

It also stresses the potential risk to the ALR, noting 9,400 hectares of farmland in Delta – more than half of the entire municipality – is in the farmland reserve.

"It is imperative that this land use concern be raised with the federal government," the report says.

Cities fear they will lose parts of their tax base – forcing tax rates up on other property owners – and that they may be unable to recover the full costs of utilities and other local public services from aboriginal reserve land.

Nor is there any mechanism for the regional district to collect regional sewage fees and development charges or for TransLink to collect its property tax on reserve.

"It just leaves it wide open," Drew said. "It all has potential to cost taxpayers money adjacent to these instant satellite reserves."

Drew said a band that plans to build a highrise in an area that's not serviced to accommodate it would create huge problems for the local government.

Metro Vancouver has also warned, in a letter to Ottawa, that the regional district and member cities may be barred from servicing land added to reserves if First Nations' development plans go against the regional growth strategy, which aims to contain urban growth.

Refusing utility servicing would be cities only way of blocking an inappropriate aboriginal development, Drew said.

"It puts municipalities in the very awkward position of having to be the bad guy."

The federal government says it's acting on First Nations' calls to streamline and accelerate the additions-to-reserve process to foster aboriginal economic development and is allowing extra time for public input.

"Additional reserve lands such as urban reserves can bring economic benefits to surrounding areas and municipalities," said federal aboriginal affairs department spokesperson Erica Meekes.

B.C. Business Council executive vice-president Jock Finlayson said the reform may give First Nations less incentive to sign treaties, but added the council generally supports more flexible use of reserve land for economic development and job creation.

"The treaty process has not created a tremendous amount of treaties," he said. "It's clear we need other tools in the toolkit."

Métis community to draft strategic plan

[Grande Prairie Daily Herald-Tribune](#)

October 22, 2013 3:17:23 MDT PM

Elizabeth McSheffrey



Métis Local 1990 treasurer Walter Andreeff.

After conducting its first ever community workshop, Grande Prairie's Métis Local 1990 will begin drafting a strategic plan for the 2014 to 2015 year.

More than 20 members of the Métis community attended the meeting on Monday to talk about municipal issues, future direction and growth of the organization.

"It went well," said secretary treasurer Walter Andreeff. "We had a good turnout, we also put across a questionnaire for people... that gave us some information that we can apply for our strategic plan."

Overall, feedback from the workshop was positive with many inquiring about membership within the Métis Local.

The group received around 50 comments in total that will be compiled into the organization's overall outline.

"We talked a lot about activities that the Métis Local had been undertaking over last year, and let people know about a lot of the different things that we're involved in," Andreeff explained.

"Quite a few people put their names down as volunteers, so we're increasing the resources meeting by meeting, which is always good."

In small groups, participants talked about Grande Prairie's economic development and the social and cultural development of the Métis community at large.

One resident asked about the possibility of hunting and fishing training for local youth, while another asked about education and job training.

"There was some talk on the environment, but mostly the focus was on what the community has been undertaking and what a possible future might look like," said the treasurer.

"We'll sit down as an executive and see what people are interested in and how that fits within the resources and requirements of our agencies."

The local will now spend the next few months filling out a “blank canvas” of activities and programs it will undertake in 2014, starting with the comments made at the workshop.

It will take weeks to go through and compile the information, but the work will be well worth the effort, said Andreeff.

“The most important aspect in all of this is to provide assistance to a Métis and Aboriginal people who are living in this local area,” he explained.

“What a strategic plan does is fully outline the resource requirements to undertake programs and initiatives of the Métis community.”

The new plan will also include budget and timeline stipulations, as well as facilitate external relationships with municipal, provincial and federal government bodies.

Federal government plans sweeping First Nations education overhaul

[Toronto Star](#)

October 23, 2013

Lee-Anne Goodman

The Conservatives tabled the First Nations Education, which would see Ottawa set and enforce standards for schools on aboriginal reserves, and take over those that fail to make the grade.



STEVE RUSSELL / TORONTO STAR file photo

Artist Shannon Thunderbird, centre, teaches a lesson on aboriginal culture at Bala Community School in Toronto last year. The Conservative government has proposed legislation it says is aimed at giving First Nations control over their own education.

OTTAWA—The federal government is proposing a sweeping education overhaul on First Nations reserves to bring aboriginal schools up to provincial standards in a purported attempt to put the brakes to a cycle of poverty among aboriginals.

The Conservatives tabled a draft of the First Nations Education Act late Tuesday that would see Ottawa set and enforce standards for schools on aboriginal reserves, and wrest temporary control of those that fail to make the grade.

“Our government firmly believes that all First Nation students across Canada deserve access to a school system that meets provincial and territorial standards,

while respecting First Nation culture, language, rights and treaties,” Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt said in a statement.

“The draft legislative proposal for First Nation education would put in place a system that is accountable to students, and ensures that First Nation students have access, like all Canadians, to a good education.”

The government has long held that substandard schooling and academic performance has played a significant role in impoverishing native Canadians. The First Nations Education Act is the centrepiece of Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s aboriginal affairs agenda.

A recent C.D. Howe Institute report determined that almost half of aboriginal students nationwide fail to get to Grade 12. The study found Manitoba had the worst record of six provinces with substantial aboriginal populations, with 63 per cent of natives failing to graduate high school.

“First Nation youth represent the fastest growing segment of the population in Canada yet they have one of the lowest graduation rates,” Valcourt added in his statement.

“Our government has listened to the calls from First Nation leadership, educators, technicians and youth who are unhappy with the current ‘non-system’ that has been failing First Nation students for years. This draft legislative proposal is a significant step forward.”

The government’s 32-page draft bill, arriving as major unrest and discontent [continues to simmer among First Nations communities](#), calls for an outside inspector to review school standards and performance every year on native reserves, and to make suggestions for improvement when necessary.

If the inspector finds that “major and persistent problems” aren’t being dealt with by First Nations, Ottawa can then appoint a temporary official to manage schools, particularly if there are “major risks to students’ safety and outcomes.”

Leading up to the unveiling of the legislation, aboriginal leaders cautioned the government against exerting too much control over First Nations.

Tyrone McNeil, president of the Vancouver-based First Nations Education Steering Committee, said a federal cash infusion for First Nations schools is the most critical issue at hand, and accused the government of treating funding “only as an after-thought” in its draft legislation.

"It's really upsetting and disconcerting ... the funding is missing, and adequately investing in First Nations education is in the interest of all Canadians," he said Tuesday night.

"The really hurtful piece of this is that the federal government is going to be more demanding, yet we'll be funded less and expected to do more, and then be held accountable for that. And there's very little accountability to parents and communities; all the accountability goes back to the minister. It's ludicrous."

Other aboriginal groups and education advocates have warned that the Harper government risks repeating the paternalistic mistakes of the past in its proposals. The Conservatives, meantime, say the legislation is ultimately aimed at giving First Nations control over their own education.

Carolyn Bennett, the Liberals' aboriginal affairs critic, urged the government to rethink its strategy.

"The Conservatives should push pause on this flawed, top-down strategy, sit down with First Nations communities and build a workable, fully funded plan that respects, supports and empowers First Nations to control their own education systems," she said in a statement.

First Nations are pressing for more say over everything from education to local governance and resource development. The so-called Idle No More movement has also been demanding a dialogue between Ottawa and First Nations about how their communities are funded and accountability for the money that's spent.

There have also been tensions over resource development projects that have spilled over political lines.

Members of New Brunswick's Elsipogtog First Nation celebrated Monday after a judge in that province lifted an injunction that ordered them to end their blockade outside a compound owned by SWN Resources. They oppose a shale gas development due to environmental concerns, fearing the impact on local drinking water supplies.

The Harper government released a so-called blueprint document this summer that promised to give First Nations authority over and accountability for their education programs.

But since then, several groups have urged Ottawa to abandon the blueprint, saying it doesn't meet standards set out by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The UN, meantime, announced earlier this month that it's launching a probe into Canada's human rights record with its aboriginal people.

The government is calling for feedback on its draft legislation before introducing it in the House of Commons.

Under the legislation, aboriginal councils remain responsible for schools on their reserves with the option to contract out work to provincial school boards or private educators if they'd prefer.

The bill also allows native councils to form First Nations education authorities that could control all the aboriginal schools in various regions of the country. Those authorities could hire teachers and principals, manage budgets and develop curricula that meets provincial standards while focusing on aboriginal culture and language.

Poor communication dogs First Nations sign removal

[Victoria News](#)

October 23, 2013

Kyle Slavin

The large cedar sign that read 'Pkols,' the original First Nation name for Mount Douglas, no longer sits atop the Saanich mountaintop.

Saanich Mayor Frank Leonard said municipal workers removed the sign last Thursday and put it into storage, after its anchor bolts were drilled into the roof of a communications building under the parking lot in May, as part of a symbolic name reclaiming ceremony.

The sign was becoming unstable, and the drill holes resulted in water leaking in to the communications building at the summit, he said.

"We just couldn't leave that through the winter," Leonard said.

Despite Saanich twice reaching out to Tsawout First Nation Chief Eric Pelkey to discuss short-term relocation for the sign – and receiving no reply – many people were upset the sign was removed without discussing it with First Nations.

"They acted without calling any of us, they didn't call (Pelkey), just sent him (two) letters in the mail," said Taiaiake Alfred, a member of the Indigenous Nationhood Movement. "Sending letters in the mail is not the most efficient way to communicate."

Pelkey, on Twitter, acknowledged a letter from Saanich was received, but it was misdirected within his office.

Despite the municipality having previously dealt with Pelkey on Pkols-related discussions, Alfred said he should've been the one Saanich contacted about sign issues.

Leonard admits Saanich should have put out a release last Thursday about the sign's removal, so there was never any confusion about where the sign went or that it was removed without the consideration of First Nations.

He said on Monday that Pelkey contacted Saanich and discussions will soon take place with regards to the future short-term location of the Pkols sign and the long-term potential of renaming or name-sharing Mount Douglas. Until that happens, the sign will remain in storage.

"It's such a significant landmark, that (later discussion) would likely involve all four (local First Nations)," Leonard said. "That discussion's bigger than any one of us."

2 aboriginal mothers missing from west Quebec reserve: Nicole Hannah Whiteduck, Laura Spence last seen Sunday on Kitigan Zibi reserve

[CBC News](#)

Oct 23, 2013 6:54 AM ET



Nicole Hannah Whiteduck, left, and Laura Spence, right, were last seen Sunday morning at the Kitigan Zibi reserve in Maniwaki, Que., about 130 kilometres north of Ottawa. (Facebook)

Police are looking into the disappearance of two women from the Kitigan Zibi reserve in

western Quebec who were last seen Sunday morning.

Nicole Hannah Whiteduck and Laura Spence were last seen on the reserve in Maniwaki, about 130 kilometres north of Ottawa, three days ago.

Both women, who are good friends and mothers, have brown hair. Whiteduck, 31, has a tattoo on her left shoulder, while Spence, 32, is a mother of four including a three-month-old.

The pair had gone out the night before their disappearance, according to Bridget Tolley, Spence's mother. She also said they left their money, wallets and cellphones at home.

Filing of police report in works

Tolley said she only became suspicious on Tuesday morning when she had not heard from her daughter. Police have been contacted but the families have yet to file a police report, although that is in the works.

"The reserve is not a big place and when you look for somebody, if they're out partying, you can find them. But this time, you know, when I went out for look for her, I couldn't find her nowhere," said Tolley, who is also the founder of Families of Sisters in Spirit, a group that raises awareness about missing and murdered aboriginal women.

"It's not like them to not come back for their babies."

Their disappearance comes a week after James Anaya, the UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people, called on the federal government to launch a "comprehensive and nationwide" inquiry into [the case of missing and murdered aboriginal women](#).

This summer, Canada's provinces also issued a joint call for a full inquiry. The federal NDP and Liberals have also requested this, but the government has yet to agree.

The Native Women's Association of Canada estimates there are more than 600 missing and murdered First Nations women across the country.

Two aboriginal women — Shannon Alexander and Maisy Odjick — went missing from Maniwaki more than five years ago. They have not been heard from since.

Quebec provincial police officers in Montreal say their [investigation into their disappearance](#) remains open.

Alward government defends record on shale consultation: Premier, energy minister dispute notion province hasn't consulted with aboriginal community

[CBC News](#)

Oct 23, 2013 6:56 AM AT



RAW: Alward on First Nations consultation

The New Brunswick government is challenging charges that it failed to consult with the aboriginal community about shale gas exploration and

development.

That idea has been put forward by aboriginal leaders, anti-shale groups and political opponents of the Alward government as a contributing factor to the violence on the protest line in Rexton last Thursday, when 40 protesters were arrested and five police vehicles were set on fire.

On Wednesday, Premier David Alward declared his government has been engaged with First Nation communities "more than any other government in New Brunswick's history."

"The evidence is there that there has been a very significant level of consultation taking place with First Nations communities across the province," said Alward.

The New Brunswick premier is also the cabinet minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

"I've taken that responsibility on personally and have been very engaged from Square 1," said Alward. "We've also said we need to continue with consultation."



Energy Minister Craig Leonard disputes charges New Brunswick's Alward government hasn't sufficiently consulted the aboriginal community about shale gas exploration and development. (CBC)

In a statement released late Tuesday, Energy Minister Craig Leonard said the government "has gone above and beyond to ensure that First Nations have full details about the current program."

Leonard released a list of more than a dozen workshops and meetings that involved aboriginal communities or leaders and SWN Resources Canada dating back to July 2012. Some of the most recent initiatives listed are:

- July 2013, an elder information session involving 23 elders representing First Nations in the Assembly of First Nation Chiefs of New Brunswick.
- August 2013, an invitation by SWN Resources Canada to the chief and council Elsipogtog First Nation to visit Arkansas.
- September 2013, a presentation to New Brunswick First Nations by the Indian Resource Council, a group representing First Nations involved in oil and gas production.

"We, as government, have also been consistently meeting with the chiefs and councils of New Brunswick First Nations and the Assembly of First Nations Chiefs of New Brunswick to discuss how we can ensure natural resource development provides significant economic opportunities to First Nations," said Leonard.

Benefits to aboriginal community?

SWN Resources had been carrying out seismic testing in Kent County this summer to gauge the potential for shale gas development. The province issued a permit to SWN to carry out the testing, and the government states the seismic program "was determined by the Crown to have a negligible risk of adverse impact on Aboriginal land use or treaty rights."

It was also recommended that SWN notify the adjacent First Nations about the seismic program and compile information on the traditional use of the proposed seismic route and discuss related issues and concerns.

Further consultation with First Nations would happen if shale gas development proceeds in the province, said Leonard.

"As we have said all along, if oil and gas reserves are found through the exploration process, the government and proponents would have to enter into further consultations with First Nations to ensure that the environment was protected and that Aboriginal peoples benefited from oil and gas development, in addition to abiding by regulations such as the environmental assessment and permitting processes required by the province before any drilling or extraction was to take place."

Leonard said previously there is a "sliding scale" when it comes to its duty to consult. And in the case of seismic testing, Leonard had maintained the duty to consult is met when the province notifies aboriginal communities that the testing is going on.

Ottawa set to enforce standards for schools on reserves

[Globe and Mail](#)

Oct. 22 2013, 7:00 PM EDT

John Ibbitson and Gloria Galloway

The Conservative government is proposing an overhaul of education on First Nations reserves to bring schools up to provincial standards, with Ottawa temporarily taking over schools that fall short.

The reforms in the First Nations Education Act, unveiled Tuesday, are the latest effort to break a cycle of educational underperformance that contributes to poverty on many reserves.

They may also trigger a confrontation with First Nations leaders.

Debate will be intense – between First Nations leaders and Ottawa, among native leaders, and between those leaders and parents and students on reserve. The Conservative government's self-imposed deadline of having the new law in place in time for the 2014 school year will not easily be met.

The draft First Nations Education proposal was [posted on the website](#) of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada on Tuesday, to elicit feedback before the bill is introduced into the House of Commons.

Morley Googoo, the chair of the Assembly of First Nations' chiefs committee on education, said there are many problems with it that could have been prevented if the First Nations had been allowed to help write it.

For instance, funds provided by the government are often inadequate to sustain schools that come anywhere close to their provincial counterparts and the problem is not solved in this legislation, Mr. Googoo said Tuesday night in a telephone call.

"They say that funding is going to be created [later] by their regulations," he said. "How are we supposed to support something without knowing the second part of the equation."

The act also prevents the government and the minister from being held liable for their work under the act, "yet he still wants his hand in the cookie jar to say 'I want control,'" Mr. Googoo said. "So that's not acceptable."

A backgrounder to the bill declares it will "recognize the responsibility and ability of First Nations to provide access to education" for students on reserves. "... It will outline base standards and services required to support success for students and schools."

Under the new act, the councils will continue to be responsible for schools on their reserves. They can maintain the status quo if they wish, but the act empowers them to contract the job out to a provincial school board or to a private company if they prefer.

Councils can also band together to create a First Nations education authority – essentially a native-run school board that could take over responsibility for administering all the schools in a region or even a province. As well as hiring teachers and principals and allocating capital budgets, the authorities would be responsible for developing a First Nations-centric curriculum that meets provincial standards while incorporating programs on native language and culture.

The most contentious clauses are certain to be those that mandate the setting and enforcing of educational standards on reserve. Each year an outside inspector must review school standards and performance, making recommendations for improvements as needed.

If “major and persistent problems” identified by the inspector are not addressed, if the school is failing financially, or if the government concludes that “there is an immediate risk of student well-being and success,” then Ottawa can appoint a temporary administrator to manage the school or schools.

One of the biggest complaints of the First Nations is that there has been a lack of consultation in the creation of this bill.

In such places as Nova Scotia where there are successful models of on-reserve education that the government wants to emulate, there was a year of discussion before an agreement was signed. But the assessment of this new legislation must be completed within a matter of months, Mr. Googoo said.

“So when other communities right now are voicing their concerns that there have been inadequate consultations and not enough time,” he said, “those concerns are very legitimate.”

No aboriginal services staff on when man died during a 34-hour wait in ER

[MacLean's](#)

October 23, 2013

Chinta Puxley

WINNIPEG – There were no aboriginal services staff working the weekend a First Nations man died during a 34-hour wait at a Winnipeg emergency room.

Aboriginal services worker Matilda Patrick told an inquest into the death of Brian Sinclair that no one in her department works weekends at Winnipeg's Health Sciences Centre.

Patrick, who acts as a liaison between aboriginal patients and staff, said she worked with Sinclair in 2007 when he lost both his legs to frostbite after being found frozen to church steps in the dead of winter.

At the time, she said he was quiet and worried about where he was going to live when he was discharged from the hospital.

"He was very soft-spoken. At times, it was hard to hear him talk but I understood what he was saying," she said Wednesday. "He asked to speak to a social worker."

Patrick said she wasn't told when Sinclair was discharged, nor is she always informed when an aboriginal patient is admitted to hospital. She said she found out about Sinclair's death in September 2008 from the media.

Sinclair was referred to hospital on Friday, Sept. 19, 2008 by a clinic doctor because he hadn't urinated in 24 hours. The double-amputee is seen on security footage wheeling himself into the hospital emergency department and speaking to a triage aide.

After the triage aide writes something down on a pad of paper, Sinclair is seen wheeling himself into the waiting room where he was discovered dead 34 hours later. While he waited, Sinclair vomited several times and was given a bowl but was never examined by medical staff. By the time he was discovered, rigor mortis had set in.

Sinclair died of a treatable bladder infection caused by a blocked catheter.

Patrick said she learned the hard way never to wake a sleeping patient because they are usually unco-operative. It was common to see people take shelter in the emergency room, she said.

"Sometimes, patients will come in beaten up or intoxicated," Patrick said. "They just let the person sleep it off and then discharge them. At first it bothered me a bit that the patient knows they shouldn't drink when it's cold outside. But it would bother anyone, not just me."

She told inquest judge Tim Preston he should recommend aboriginal services be staffed seven days a week.

The inquest also heard from a patient who was triaged around the same time Sinclair arrived at the hospital. Kathy Boddy said she remembered Sinclair from the

waiting room — not because he was drawing attention to himself but because he was a double-amputee in a wheelchair.

"I recall him having his head down. I thought he was just resting," she said. "He just stuck in my mind that day."

Boddy said she was told by nursing staff she would likely be waiting a long time for care and ended up leaving without being seen.

"It was really busy," she said. "The waiting room was quite full."

The inquest continues for the rest of the month and is expected to hear from the couple who first noticed Sinclair was dead and tried to alert security.

Vancouver Caravan to Support Miq'Maq

[Net Newsledger](#)

October 23, 2013

James Murray



THUNDER BAY – Aboriginal – The Organizers of the Vancouver caravan to New Brunswick have issued the following statement for those that wish to join up on our crosscountry journey.

"Our goal is to travel to our Miq'Maq brothers and sisters who faced the atrocious actions by members of the [R.C.M.P.](#) We wish to carry the message that no individual nation stands alone, and that when the Warriors put a callout for help. It is has been heard from Coast to Coast.

"You are not alone.

"We would like to also add that this is not an [Idle No More](#) event. In our view Idle No More is the grassroots level of political action. The people on the ground floor who inspire change from their peers. We stand side by side our Idle-No-More organizers.

"This is not just an 'aboriginal issue' as mainstream media would lead you to believe. Water is the source of life. With out clean water our traditional way of life is compromised. The salmon would stop running. The grounds would dry up and turn to dust. Our drinking water would become poisonous to drink.

"After we started working on the project 4 short days ago, We came to the conclusion that this is not only an 'aboriginal issue'. This is a Canadian issue with consequences that will affect the generations that will come after us. Now is the time to Stand Up and make your voice be heard. We want you to role model the positive change that you want to see in the future. Our younger generation will remember this as the time that YOU stood up for their rights so they did not have to.

"We will be traveling across the Provinces with drums in one hand and our medicines in the other. Our overall goal is not a show of force, but a showing of peaceful solidarity. We in no way shape or form advise for violent clashes on our peaceful journey".

Arviat offers an authentic Inuit experience to Nunavut tourists: Polar bears and culture draw visitors to Arviat

[Nunatsiaq News](#)

October 24, 2013



Arviat as their destination.

Sarah Rogers

German tourists Luise and Michaela, left, listen to a throat singing performance at Arviat's visitor centre Oct. 23 during a two-day visit to the community. (PHOTO BY SARAH ROGERS)

ARVIAT — Two women giggle as they watch two Inuit elders in traditional amautiit climb aboard an all-terrain-vehicle and drive off into the night.

But for Luise and Micheala, it also confirms why they chose

The two German women have travelled throughout Europe, through South America and to Australia. When they were planning this year's trip, they looked to Canada, but decided they wanted to see something they'd never seen before.

And they did. In an action-packed two-day visit, the women ate a caribou dinner, sat in on a throat singing and drum dancing performance, and saw eight polar bears up close, including a mother with her cubs.

"It was just amazing," said Luise, who didn't want to share her last name.

"When we came we thought it would be the end of the world here, but it's amazing to find so much up here," she said. "I really like they keep their culture alive, that everyone still goes hunting and makes their own clothes."

It's that impression of Arctic authenticity that travel firm [G Adventures honed when they designed the two to four-day package](#), combining polar bear watching with a taste of local culture.

While Inuit culture and polar bears abound in Arviat, it doesn't mean bringing in tourists was easy.

When the hamlet hired its first tourism coordinator in 2011, Olivia Tagalik said she hardly knew what tourism was as a product.

Since then, she's grown a circle of local people to help share what they do in their community — throat singers, artists, hunters — while training others in hospitality.

"A lot of what we've been seeing is that Arviat has a very unique and strong culture, and that's what draws a lot of people here," she said from her office overlooking Hudson Bay. "And people here are willing to share our culture, so that's a big thing — showing them that Inuit culture is very alive today."

As far as Arctic destinations go, Arviat is also among the most accessible in the country, adding to the community's tourism slogan ["Canada's accessible Arctic."](#)

Many of Arviat's "tourist attractions" are planned: trips to historical sites, traditional entertainment or boat excursions in the summer months.

But Tagalik said much of it is natural and spontaneous too, such as seeing a carver at work outside his home, or children cleaning seal skins with their parents.

Visitors who want to see polar bears will go out with a guide on an ATV or snowmobile. They can also stop at a heated cabin protected by an electric fence.

With an increase in polar bears in and around Arviat over the last decade, wildlife tourism is a natural fit, while the community looks to Canada's polar bear capital, Churchill, Manitoba.

"Competing with Churchill would be next to impossible — they've been doing it forever and they do it well," Tagalik said. "What we're trying to showcase is Inuit culture first."

But Tagalik has still worked to create a partnership with operators in Churchill, calling it a "great benefit to the community."

With a couple of hotels and one dining room, Arviat's tourist infrastructure is still modest from a tourism operator's perspective, but Tagalik said this will change over time.

"The community has been growing pretty steadily, and with that, you get more infrastructure," she said, pointing to a new store opening in town and hotel room upgrades.

"It's a long process but it's starting."

Awards for work on aboriginal issues: Governor General recognizes efforts of two Winnipeggers

[Brandon Sun](#)

Oct. 24, 2013 at 8:13 AM



MIKE DEAL / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

Matt Henderson was recognized for leading his students in researching and publishing a collection of historical fiction.

Two Winnipeggers are among the Canadians to be honoured with awards from the Governor General at Rideau Hall for work linked to aboriginal issues.



[Enlarge Image](#)

Nahanni Fontaine

Nahanni Fontaine, a special adviser on aboriginal women's issues for the province, was named one of five recipients of the 2013 Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Person's Cases.

Matt Henderson, a teacher at St. John's-Ravenscourt School, is one of six Canadians named as a 2013 recipient of the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching.

An Ojibway from Sagkeeng First Nation, Fontaine was named for her work to advance recognition of, and action on, the issue of missing and murdered aboriginal girls and women. "I'm really honoured and humbled by this," Fontaine said.

She said the award is a testament to the importance of building relationships between the victims' families, the government and the police investigating the murders and disappearances.

Henderson claimed the honour for his work into the Idle No More movement in 2012 and how the events of history shaped its progression. With his Grade 11 class of 20 students, Henderson's guidance led to an examination of the key moments in the early fur trade and subsequent government legislation in the following decades.

This work resulted in a published book of short historical fiction titled *Because of a Hat*, a collection based around the development of the Red River region, the rise of the Hudson's Bay Company and Northwest Company and the birth of a Métis nation between 1738 and 1869.

Henderson said the credit is shared with his class. "I'm excited," he said, adding the award names him, but it's really for the work his students did to research and publish the book.

"I feel a little silly about it; that's what teachers are supposed to do and the kids did all the work," Henderson said.

Henderson's award is presented by the Governor General, but award recipients are chosen by the national, Winnipeg-based Canada's History Society. Using its role to popularize Canada's history, the society publishes the magazine Canada's History.

Deborah Morrison, CEO of the society, said the award is the country's top history honour and it encourages teachers to help students find their place in Canadian history.

In an interview, she said Henderson took his class to the Manitoba Archives at the height of the Idle No More rallies last winter and urged them to look at the Hudson Bay Archives and private journals there to explore the roots of the relationship between Canada's indigenous people and the fur traders in Western Canada.

"He's a brilliant teacher and he recognized the (significance) of the records and with the book the rest of us can benefit from it," Morrison said.

Fontaine will be presented with her award at a ceremony Tuesday at Rideau Hall in Ottawa. Henderson will get an awards certificate from Canada's History Society on Friday at Kildonan East Collegiate, followed by a formal presentation at Rideau Hall on Nov. 19.

Chief wants digging stopped in area where remains were found: Aboriginal bones could be 1,000 years old

[CBC News](#)

Oct 23, 2013 12:30 PM CT



Elders came out to the construction site to see the area where ancient aboriginal remains were discovered. (CBC)

Carry the Kettle First Nation chief Barry Kennedy was in Saskatoon Wednesday morning, but went down to the Bethune area later in the day.

TransGas, a subsidiary of SaskEnergy that's building a

new natural gas connection for the K+S potash mine in the area, halted construction

a week ago after discovering the remains. Experts say they predate European settlement and could be as much as 1,000 years old.

While the site where the bones were found is still being left alone, construction work continues in the area.

However, Kennedy thinks all digging should be halted for now because he says TransGas was basically building its pipeline through a cemetery.

He says the bones are likely ancestral remains and ceremonies need to be performed.



Work crews have discovered ancient aboriginal remains near Moose Jaw. (Bonnie Allen/CBC)

"I know that Saskatchewan society would never allow anybody to dig through any cemetery site, and it was very obvious from warnings that [TransGas] knew the potential of this being a ceremonial site was very high, but still went through," he said.

Kennedy said SaskEnergy's pipeline company disregarded burial sites in plain view and other ceremonial markers.

"It's obvious from the stone formations that these are Nakota people," said Kenedy. "We have seen teepee rings, places of where there used to be sweat lodges, other grave sites, the spear keepers associated with a medicine wheel, a great number of things that are significant to our traditions and religious ways."

"We've called for a cease and desist."

TransGas told CBC that it did the necessary environmental and aboriginal consultations before proceeding with its project.

Kennedy will go to his people and elders to decide what should happen to the remains.

TransGas had halted pipeline construction last week, but allowed crews to resume digging in the area on Tuesday. There wasn't any digging activity on Wednesday, while Kennedy was on site, and he wants to make sure it stays that way.

According to Carlos Germann, the province's director of heritage conservation, workers are well away from where the bones were discovered.

It's not likely that more are going to be found, but that's being monitored by heritage consultants, he said.

There are protocols and policies in place and they're being followed, he added. The Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre and Committee of Elders has been contacted.

So far, the remains of only one person have been found. They're being analyzed at the University of Saskatchewan by forensic anthropologist Ernie Walker.

First Nations troubadour Willie Dunn sang truth to power

[Globe And Mail](#)

24 October 2013 13:36

Noreen Shanahan

"It's important for aboriginal people to tell their own stories," Willie Dunn told his fans, "because Hollywood has done enough."

Mr. Dunn was given his unofficial middle name – Roha'tiio – by a Mohawk chief in Akwesasne. It means "his voice is beautiful."

A singer, songwriter and award-winning documentary filmmaker, Mr. Dunn was a trailblazer in the native community. The spirit of his work was saturated with the lives and histories of aboriginal people. He always said that reclaiming a voice for native people is critical because optimism and hope haven't brought change.

"Please understand that Willie and other activists, singers and poets of his generation had no role models to direct them ..." said elder Albert Dumont. "The drum and our ceremonies came back into the light because of them."

Mr. Dunn died on Aug. 5 in Ottawa of cancer. He was 71. He leaves his partner, Liz Moore; children William, Lawrence and Pamela; and granddaughters Jessica, Mya and Melody.

Over his career, Mr. Dunn released several albums, including Willie Dunn, The Pacific, Metallic and Son of the Sun. He was inducted into the Aboriginal Walk of Honour and earned lifetime achievement recognition from the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards.

He was compared to Leonard Cohen and Gordon Lightfoot, but the power in his protest ballads were more like Pete Seeger's We Shall Overcome, Buffy Sainte-Marie's Universal Soldier or Neil Young's Ohio.

Particularly notable is his 1968 National Film Board short, The Ballad of Crowfoot, about the 19th-century Blackfoot chief. The film, set to Mr. Dunn's song by the same name, is considered Canada's first music video and one of the earliest NFB films directed by an aboriginal filmmaker.

Using a powerful montage of archival photographs and film footage of buffalo being slaughtered, it starkly displays the history brutally inflicted upon aboriginal Canadians by colonial settlers. "You are the leader, you are the chief. You stand against both liar and thief," Mr. Dunn sings. "... They shoot the buffalo. Kill the game. Send their preachers into shame."

The Ballad of Crowfoot won seven international awards, including a Gold Hugo for best short film at the 1969 Chicago International Film Festival.

Mr. Dunn's other NFB credits include working as a filmmaker on These Are My People... and The Other Side of the Ledger: An Indian View of the Hudson's Bay Company. His music was used as a soundtrack for the films Incident at Restigouche, detailing a 1981 police raid on the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation, and Okanada, about the 1990 standoff in Oka, Que.

Often called a First Nations ambassador for Canada, there's a story in the native community about Mr. Dunn whispering into the Queen's ear during her 1971 visit to British Columbia to celebrate the centennial of the province's entry into Confederation. "We are not your children any more," he reportedly said.

Born in Montreal on Aug. 14, 1941, into a family of eight children, he was of Mi'kmaq and Scottish/Irish background. His father, William Dunn, was a labourer, a poet and a sometime hobo. Willie recorded into music one of his father's poems,

Rattling along on a Freight Train. Every Saturday afternoon his mother, Stella Metallic, would tune in to the Metropolitan Opera. Poetry, music and the noise of children filled their home. Later in life, Mr. Dunn would perform T.S. Eliot's poetry and Shakespeare's sonnets to the sound of drumming and native chants.

According to his partner, Liz Moore, Willie was 15 when he was handed his first guitar. He taught himself to play and sneaked into Montreal cafés to watch blues musicians Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee.

In his 20s, Mr. Dunn served a three-year stint in the army and was awarded a United Nations medal for service in the Congo.

His old army friend Ken Diamond recalls the two of them almost freezing to death while hitchhiking from Camp Borden in Ontario to Montreal. But Mr. Dunn made it back to Montreal at the peak of the sixties folk music explosion, and tucked his guitar under his arm and cast off again.

He toured the clubs in New York's Greenwich Village, then performed more widely across the United States, including at the legendary Caffè Lena in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., where the likes of Bob Dylan, Emmylou Harris and the McGarrigle sisters played.

In 1971, forging a link between his love of music and his interest in aboriginal issues, he helped establish the Native Council of Canada. Tony Belcourt, founding president of the Métis Nation of Ontario, who worked with Mr. Dunn in the early years of the Native Council, called his songs radical poetic documentaries of historic injustice.

"Willie was among the best of Canadian protest songwriters of the sixties and seventies, if not the best aboriginal songwriter. Because he wrote about Canadian people and Canadian issues, aboriginal people, both Métis and First Nations."

Following on the heels of Crowfoot, Mr. Dunn wrote the song Charlie Wenjack, based on the story of a 12-year-old boy who died on the road after fleeing a residential school in 1966. "Nobody was talking about residential schools back in the sixties or seventies. It was just this plethora of injustice that was going on. The whole range was something that Willie wrote about," Mr. Belcourt said.

"Willie Dunn's music spoke truth to power and all power to the people," said Brian Wright-McLeod, author of *The Encyclopedia of Native Music*.

He recalls flicking on the TV one day at nine years old and stumbling across *The Ballad of Crowfoot*. "Growing up in a white community, it was really empowering and fulfilling to see something like that," Mr. Wright-McLeod said. "It made such a huge impact on me. ... Willie Dunn was like a bard for those times."

As a native performer, Mr. Dunn faced challenges and limitations on where he was invited to play. While on tour in the late sixties, he was booked by his agent to perform at a saloon in Kenora, Ont., where he was quickly heckled off the stage by people offended by his protest ballads. Mr. Dunn quietly put down his guitar and slipped out of the bar into safety.

"He kind of had some words with his agent over that," said Mr. Wright-McLeod. "He laughed about it – it's just one of those things, we still face that stuff."

Over the next few decades, however, Mr. Dunn's career took him to larger venues where he was neither threatened nor heckled, including in Italy, Switzerland and Germany. Some of his work was recorded under a German record label, and it's possible he was played more widely in Germany than in Canada.

In 1993, Mr. Dunn stepped toward a more traditional route for political protest. He won the NDP's nomination for Ottawa-Vanier in the federal election, finishing fourth against Liberal incumbent Jean-Robert Gauthier.

He returned to singing, corralling support in that familiar arena. He participated in the First Peoples Arts Showcase tour in 1998 and the Nations in a Circle spotlight of 2002. In 2004, he won a Canada Council grant to attend the WOMEX Showcase in Germany.

After a lifetime of songwriting and performances, he slowed down in his sixth decade, choosing a paintbrush over a microphone, and creating beautiful talking sticks depicting eagles, trout and salmon.

But according to his old friend Mr. Belcourt, "Willie's regular self was sitting on the floor with everyone else, playing his guitar, singing his songs and enjoying a cool beer."

FSIN leaders call ad 'racist'

[The StarPhoenix](#)

October 24, 2013 8:05 AM

Jason Warick

Current and former First Nations chiefs are imploring the Saskatchewan Party to stop running a "racist" television advertisement which claims revenue-sharing with First Nations will cost taxpayers billions of dollars.

"It creates division. It creates animosity," Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde said Wednesday in his opening remarks to the FSIN fall assembly on the Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

In the ad, the Sask. Party criticizes the Saskatchewan NDP's support in the 2011 election for resource-revenuesharing with First Nations. The ad claims revenue-sharing will cost provincial taxpayers billions of dollars.

Resource revenuesharing is already in place with First Nations in multiple Canadian jurisdictions, including British Columbia and Quebec. Premier Brad Wall has stated repeatedly that his government will not share resource revenues with First Nations or any other group.

Bellegarde and elder Ted Quwezance, who also addressed the crowd of approximately 400 delegates and guests at the assembly, both called the ad "racist," saying it perpetuates negative stereotypes.

Bellegarde said the ads have strained relations between the Saskatchewan Party and First Nations people.

"This is the worst kind of politics," said Quwezance, a former chief and advocate for residential school abuse victims.

"Shame on the Saskatchewan Party. Shame on Mr. Wall."

Quwezance said the ad came as a surprise, given the Saskatchewan Party's claims to support First Nations aspirations in education, health care and other areas. He said revenue-sharing would empower First Nations to provide better services and improve the quality of life on reserves. Quwezance said there is already a limited revenue-sharing agreement with First Nations in the forestry sector, and all parties agree it has worked well.

The FSIN leaders called on Wall to admit the ad was a mistake and to remove it from the airwaves.

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Pipeline will go deep, won't disturb ancient bones, TransGas says: Bone fragments found near Bethune, Sask., could predate European contact

[CBC News](#)

Oct 24, 2013 1:40 PM CT



On Wednesday, First Nations elders visited the site of recently discovered ancient bones near Bethune, Sask. (Bonnie Allen/CBC)

To avoid disturbing the site where ancient human bones were discovered, a Saskatchewan pipeline company says it will tunnel deep below.

TransGas is building a gas transmission line near Bethune, Sask. that will service the new K+S potash mine.

However, on Oct. 15, workers unearthed bone fragments and digging came to a halt. Some of the remains are being analysed by forensics experts at the University of Saskatchewan.

Experts say the bones likely date back to the time before European settlers came into contact with the local aboriginal population.

Carry the Kettle First Nation officials and elders from the Nakota Nation visited the site Wednesday for a sacred blessing ritual and to examine the site.

On Thursday, TransGas, which is a subsidiary of SaskEnergy, said work on the pipeline will continue without digging trenches and in a way that won't disturb the remains.

That means tunnelling down roughly 10 metres to 50 metres below the surface and installing pipe for a distance of about one kilometre.

SaskEnergy says discussions with First Nations groups are still underway, so work on the pipeline will not proceed in the area for the time being.

Bethune is about 55 kilometres northwest of Regina.